BEFORE THE BOARD OF PERSONNEL APPEALS

IN THE MAUTER OF THE UNPAIR LABOR PRACTICE

CHARGE #13, 1976

BOCKY BOY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, an affiliate of MONTANA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,

Complainant,

Vs.

BOCKY BOY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 87,

Defendant.

A proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order was issued by Hearing Examiner, Mr. Jerry L. Painter on December 14, 1976 finding that teacher evaluation is a mandatory subject of bargaining and ordered the Hoard to negotiate that subject with petitioner. Exceptions to that Order were filed by the Hocky Boy School District No. 87, and oral argument was heard by the Board of Personnel Appeals on March 1, 1977. After reviewing the record and considering the briefs and oral arguments, the

 IT IS ORDERED, that the Exceptions to the Hearing Examiner's Proposed Findings of Fast, Conclusions of Law and Proposed Order are denied.

IT IS ORDERED, than this Board adopts the Findings of Pact, Conclusions of Law and Order issued by the Hearings Examiner.

Dated this 17th day of June, 1977.

Board makes the following Order:

BOARD OF PERSONNEL APPEALS

By Chestran



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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PERSONNEL APPEALS

IN THE MATTER OF UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE #13-76 3

ROCKY BOY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION an affiliate of MONTANA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION.

ULP-13-1976

Complainant,

FINDINGS OF PACT CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND RECOMMENDED ORDER.

-715-

ROCKY BOY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 87.

Defendant.

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Complainants have charged Defendant with several unfair labor practices. It has charged that Defendant has interfered with the administration of a labor organization, has discriminated in regard to tenure of employment to Alscourage Membership in a labor organization, and has refused to bargain collectively in good faith with Complainant. The matter concerning the reinstatement of Richard Letang was addressed in a Proposed Findings of Pact. Conclusion of Law, and Recommended Order issued by this hearing examiner, November 5, 1976. This decision shall deal with the charges of interfering with the administration of a labor organization, and the refusal to bargain collectively in good faith. Since the issues concerning what are and what are not mandatory subjects of bargaining were submitted on briefs, I will deal with that matter separately in this decision.

Before I begin writing the formal decision, however, I must address the issue that was all porvesive throughout the hearing and an issue which Complainant dedicated a large portion of its brief to: Indian education and the preservation of their cultural integrity. The question and the problem has been of much concern to this hearing examiner. Can collective bargaining and Indian Control of Indian education he reconciled? One only has to visit the Rocky Boy School District to be impressed with the efforts of

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the School District in instilling Indian cultural haritage in the school children at the school. It is a task and an effort deserving high praise and support.

On the other side of the coin is the right to collective bargaining given to every public employee, regardless of whether or not the state employee is employed on an Indian Reservation. This Board was established to administer the Montana Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. This Board is a strong supporter of collective bargaining in the public sector. If allowed to work properly it can provide stable relationships between public employers and their employees. Ultimately, the stable relationship can provide better service to the consumer, who in this case are the students attending Bocky Boy School.

I do not believe that collective bargaining by the teachers in the Rocky Boy District is a threat to the school district's goal of preserving the cultural integrity of the students attending the school. If used properly, collective bargaining can be an asset. The teachers must be made members of the team in pursuit of the school district's goal. There nust be an atmosphere of professionalism for the teachers to function and make their contribution to the school's goals. Pinally and most importantly, if the teachers are not treated as professionals by the school administration, to create good feelings between the two groups, then both the students and the ultimate goals of the school district will suffer. Although I will address this issue throughout my decision. I must at this time conclude that good faith bargaining by the school administration and the teachern is in no way a threat to the School District's goal of preserving the cultural integrity of the Indian Students.

The first portion of this decision shall deal with the Issue of whether or not Defendant is guilty of interfering with the administration of a labor organization, and guilty of refusing to



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bargain collectively in good faith. After reviewing the evidence, the testimony and the briefs submitted by both parties, the following are my findings of fact:

FINDINGS OF FACTS

- 1. The Bocky Boy Education Association is the employerrecognized bargaining agent for "all personnel cartificated in
 Class 1, 2, 4, or 5 as provided in Section 74-6006, R.C.M. 1947,
 and principals certificated in Class 3, if they ellect to be
 included, whether under contract or on leave." (SBE: Joint
 Exhibit A)
- 2. The Rocky Boy Association served formal notice upon the School District that it wished to enter into formal negotiation sessions. (SEE: Patitioner's Exhibit 9A)
- 3. Dorothy Small sent the letter back requesting that corrections of the typing errors be made. (SEE: Petitioner's Exhibit SE)
- A. From January 19, 1976, to June 16, 1976, the two parties not approximately 20 times for a total of approximately 86 hours.

 (SEE: Defendant's Exhibit 10. The exhibit was not contradicted by any testimony.)
- 5. Petitioner's Exhibit 1 through 5, letters from the School District cancelling scheduled negotiation sessions, show that the school district cancelled 5 bargaining sessions. Testimony of Richard Letang on cross-examination shows that the RBEA negotiation team members agreed to the cancellation of four of the meetings. One of the cancellations was not agreed to: the neno dated February 17, 1976, cancelling negotiations until further notice because Harold and Gerald Gray would be out of town. Gerald Gray, however, denied that the Association did not agree to the cancellation. The next negotiation session took place on February 25, 1976, after the February 17th cancellation.
 - 6. Patitioner's Exhibit 7 shows that a letter hand delivered



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by Harold Gray, was presented to Mr. Letang demanding inspection of the local MEA's minutes. The letter was signed by Dorothy Small, Gerald Gray, and Harold Gray. The letter asserted that Article II, Section C of the 1975-1976 agreement required compliance with the demand. (SEE: Petitioner's Exhibit 7)

7. Article II Section C reads:

"In so far as it is the legal requirement of the Board
to permit inspection of minutes, financial information,
or other lawful information to taxpayers and other interested community members, the Association hereby agrees to
grant the same courtesy to the Board," (SEE: Joint Exhibit A)

8. On March 10, 1876, a letter was handed to Mr. Letang by Harald Gray and signed by Dorothy Small which questioned the legality of the local Rocky Boy MEA Unit to act as the collective bargaining representation for the local school teachers. The letter further questioned when the RBEA's constitution and bylaws were passed. It stated:

"If you refuse to provide us with the official minutes of the association's meeting documenting the official input by teachers and adoption of the association's constitution and bylaws, then we will consider that you are not willing to negotiate in 'good faith' and that your organization is attempting to conceal it's dishonesty.

So that their is no misunderstanding among all concerned we are sending a copy of this letter displaying our concern to all of your membership, the board members, school administrators, and it's negotiation representatives."

- 9. The School District circulated questionnaires to the teachers of the school district with the following 5 questions:
 - "1. Bo you have a copy of the local M.E.A. Association's Constitution and by-laws? Yes No
 - 2. Have you ever been given a copy?
 - 3. Have you ever been involved in writing up the association's constitution and by-laws? When?



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Have you ever gone over the local M.B.A. Association's constitution and by-laws in a meeting?

(SEE: Petitioner's Exhibit 15)

10. During a Murch negotiation session, Sean Mathews, an MEA staff representative, testified that Gerald Gray demanded proof that the Association continued to represent the teachers. There was no testimony to refute the testimony.

11. A letter from Tom Swisher, a teacher of the school district was entered into evidence by Defendant School District, The letter was addressed to "Dick Letang; President MEA Rocky Boy School". The letter states the disantisfaction Mr. Swisher had with the representation of MEA. Mr. Swisher alleges he was misrepresented by MHA in negotiations in a couple of ways. One way was the failure to assortate housing and utilities, the other was the failure to inform Mr. Swisher of the progress in negotiations. (SER: Defendant Exhibit 7) The Board suggested that the letter treated sufficient doubt as to the representation of RBEA. of the teaching staff of Rocky Boy School District.

12. Testimony has established that the school board has failed to provide tape recordings of the negotiation sessions when requested by RBEA which is contray to their agreement with REEA. DISCUSSION

Considering the above findings of fact this Board is quite alarmed at what has transpired during negotiations. The sending back of Mr. Letung's letter with the note attached to correct the errors is a rude act and an act which shows little respect for the professional relationship between the two groups involved in the negotistions. It also set the entire collective bargaining process off on the wrong fact. It would be similar to starting off a marriage by slapping your spouse in the face. One could expect If the from such a marriage, and certainly, one can expect little

from collective bargaining which started out on the wrong foot,

But the proceedings went from bad to worse. Although this Board connet fault the School Board for requesting minutes that were agreed in the contract would be exchanged, the other demands made by the School Board shows a lack of trust and respect for RBEA. Requiring a report on the MEA convention, denanding bylaws, refusing to give tape recording which partly belonged to RDEA, and demanding proof of support at the bargaining table when no good faith showing of doubt of majority representation existed all of this is proof to this Board of harassment of RBEA by the School District. There was insufficient evidence presented at the hearing to establish that any of this was done in good faith. One letter from a disgruntled RBEA member is insufficient to produce a good faith doubt of RBEA's support. There is always one or two disgruntled union members. If this Board were to condone: such conduct with such flimsy showing of good faith, we would be encouraging the constant harassment of bargaining representatives throughout the state.

The School District argued that it had a right to see the bylaws and to question the establishment of the bylaws. I do not
agree. The bylaws are the concern of the persons joining the
union, and become the concern of this Board when we are petitioned
to certify that union as a bargaining representative. (SEE: \$91003(4)) They are not the concern of the employer. They are the
internal affairs of the union which assagement must keep its nose
out of.

The School District points out that over 80 hours of bargaining has transpired between the two parties. If those hours are spent in harassment and bickering between the two parties, it can hardly be labeled good faith collective hargaining.

The legislature in establishing the Montana Public Employees
Collective Bargaining Act stated that the reason for establishing



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the act was "to promote public husiness by removing certain recognized sources of strife and unrest...." In the fact situation before me now, the only thing that has been accomplished is the promotion of strife and unrest.

I fail to find that the cancellations of the negotiation sessions by the School District were a part of this harassment by the School District. All but one of the cancellations were agreed to by RBEA. All cancellations seem to have legitimate reasons. This does not, however, give the School District a carte blanche right to cancel negotiation sessions. Section 59-1605(3) requires parties to meet at reasonable times. Such requirement would negate the right to a unilateral cancellation of negotiation session without substantial good reason.

SECOND ISSUE

The next issue I have been asked to rule on in the scope of bargaining between the two parties. The School Board has refused to bargain on certain subjects which RBEA have made requested to be bargained. There are six topics:

- Just Cause for dismissal of all teachers.
- 2. Teacher Evaluation.
- 5. Teacher working hours.
- 4. Maintenance of standards clause.
- 5. Housing and utilities clause.
- 0. Job description of non-classroom certified personnel.

Except for Housing and Utilities clause, the subjects were submitted as questions of law and were dealt with by brief submitted by counsel for both sides.

Upon reviewing the question of maintenance of Standards Clause,

1 am not convinced that the School Board has refused to negotiate
on the subject but rather have refused to concede to the demands
of RBEA. I obtain this impression from petitioner's exhibit 6.

I therefore will not rule on whether or not a maintenance of standards
clause is a negotiable subject.



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As to the question of job descriptions for non-classroom certified personnel, the question is not merely a legal question but is also an evidentiary question. I cannot rule on the natter on the limited knowledge of the matter I have before me. Upon motions of either counsel I will reopen the natter to take the necessary evidence, or in the alternative have a stipulation of fact presented to me which would allow me to rule on the matter.

As to just cause for dismissal of all teachers, again from petitioner's exhibit #6 I am convinced that the School Board has done nothing more than refused to concede to the demands of HBEA.

I do not interpret patitioner's exhibit #6 as declaring the matter nonnegotiable. I will, therefore, not rule on that matter either.

The three matters left for my determination of whother or not the subject is a mandatory subject of hargaining are teacher evaluation, teacher working hours, and housing and utilities clause.

Because of the testimony offered concerning the housing and utilities, the following is my findings of fact:

15. The Sullivan, a teacher in the School District last year testified that when he interviewed with the School District he was informed that the teachers were required to live in the school housing. Later, it was qualified that some teachers live in Havre but the School District preferred teachers to live in the school district housing.

Mr. Gerald Gray denied that there was any requirement or pressure for teachers to live in school district housing.

It is my finding that there is no formal policy of the School District requiring teachers to live in school district housing. Nor did I find there to be any pressuring of the teachers to live in school district housing. Although Mr. Sullivan may have felt pressured into living in the school district housing, I am not convinced that it was not just Mr. Sullivan's own interpretation of what was said to him as opposed to being the school district's



official (or unofficial) position.

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14. Testimony further established that the approximate cost for a 3 bedroom home in the school district housing cost approximately \$125 per month. This testimony was uncontroverted. Defendant's Exhibit #13 (miso uncontroverted) showed that the average cost to tent a 3 bedroom home of similar quality as those in the school district housing is between \$500 and \$325.

The problem of determining what is and what is not a mandatory subject of bargaining has been presented to this Board before and is slowly becoming a reoccurring problem. This Board has never attempted to establish a list of rules to be used to make a determination of whether a matter is mandatory subject of bargaining as a panaces to this problem. It has chosen rather to take each problem case-by-case.

There is a definite trend, however, toward adoption of a balancing approach in determining what is and what is not a mandatory topic of collective bargaining. The approach has been taken because of the nature of collective bargaining in the public sector. Public employees have the right under Section 59-1603(1) to:

"the right of self-organization, to form, join or assist any labor organization, to burgain collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, fringe benefits, and other conditions of employments and to engage in concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint or coercion."

Under subsection (2) of the same section are enumerated management prerogatives. "Other conditions of employment" and the management prerogatives enumerated under subsection (2) are both so general that interpretation by this Board becomes mandatory. In its interpretation this Board must keep paramount the policy of the act. 59-1601:

"Policy. In order to promote public business by



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removing certain recognised sources of strife and unrest, it is the policy of the State of Montana to encourage the practice and procedure of collective bargaining to arrive at friendly adjustment of all disputes between public employers and employees".

In order for this Board to promote public business by removing certain recognized sources of strife and unrest, we must balance how a matter affects the well being of an individual teacher with the right of a public official to properly manage the affairs of the public body he administers.

The interpretation of subsections (1) and (2) of Section 591603 requires a striking of a balance where those matters relating
directly to "wages, hours, fringe benefits, and other conditions
of employment" are made mandatory subjects of bargaining and
reserving to management those areas that the public sector necessarily requires to be managerial functions. In striking this
belonce the paramount concern must be the public interest in
providing for the effective and efficient performance of the
public service in question.

this problem. National Education Ass's, of Shawnee Mission, Inc.

v. Board of Education of Shawnee Mission Unified School District

No. 512, 212 Kan 741, 512 P.7d 426 (1973). In that decision the

Court was confronted with a dispute between a teachers' association

and the board of education. In resolving questions relating to

the scope of negotiations provided under their statute they

recognized that "terms and condition" which were negotiable under

the terms of the statute as something more than minimal economic

terms of wages and hours, but something less than the basic

educational policies of the board of education. That Court

suggested that the courts of that jurisdication should resolve

these issues on a case-by-case basis. The Kansas court suggested:

"The key, as we see it, is how direct the impact of an insue is on the well being of the individual teacher, as opposed to its effect on the operation of the school system as a whole." Id. 512 F.2d 435.

This hearing examiner believes that the suggested terms

This hearing examiner believes that the suggested test is helpful in attempting to strike the balance between subsection (1) and (2) of Section 59-1603 of our statute.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court agreed with the Kansas Supreme Court and in Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board v. State College Area School District 337 A.2d 262. 80 LRRM 2081 (1975) the court stated that its test shall be:

"Thus we hold that where an item of dispute is a matter of fundamental concern to the employees' interest in wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment, it is not removed as a matter subject to good faith bargaining under section 701 simply because it may touch upon basic policy. It is the duty of the Board in the first instance and the courts thereafter to determine whether the impact of the issue on the Interest of the amployee in wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment out weighs its probable effect on the basic policy of the system as a whole. is determined that the matter is one of inherent managerial policy but does affect wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment, the public employer shall be required to meet and discuss such subjects upon request by the public employee's representative pursuant to section 702."

The Oregon Court of Appeals also adopted the balancing approach. SEE: Sutherlin Education Ass'n. v. Sutherlin School District No. 130, 548 P.2d 204 and Springfield Education Ass'n. v. Springfield School District No. 19, 548 P.2d 1141. In



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Sutherlin the Oregon Court Stated:

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"Rather, the appropriate test to be applied in determining whether a proposed subject is n 'condition of employment' and therefore a mandatory subject for bargaining is to balance the element of educational policy involved against the effect the subject has on a teacher's employment." Id 548 P.2d 205.

In applying that test to the three subjects in question I determine as follows:

Teacher Evaluation. This Board in ULP #15, 1975, Billings Education Association v. School District #2; held that teacher evaluation is a mandatory subject of bargaining. We are not persunded by Respondent's argument that we should change that ruling. Teacher evaluations affects the very security of a teacher's position. It affects his tenure, hiring, firing, and future promotions. It is essential, therefore, to the well being of the individual teacher that the matter be a subject of negotistions. In order for this Board to promote public business by removing certain recognized sources of strife and unrest, it is essential that we allow the teacher input on this very important subject at the bargaining table. This Board's decision in ULP #16 is currently under judicial review. If this Board's decision is ultimately overturned, an order amending this order will be issued in accordance with that decision.

Housing and Otilities. This hearing examiner has determined in his findings of fact that there is no official or unofficial school policy requiring teachers to live in school district housing. Nor did he find any pressure to be exerted on the teacher to live there. Because it is not mandatory that teachers live in this housing we do not find housing and utilities to be related to the individual well being of the teacher. True, as the housing costs and utilities go up, the teachers feel it in their paycheck. But that is true of all persons who rent.



This hearing examiner finds, however, that there is nothing that makes the subject an illegal subject of bargaining. Therefore we find it to be a permissive subject of bargaining.

School Hours. This hearing examiner does not conclude that
the hour of beginning school closely affects the well being of
the individual teacher. Whether or not school starts at 7:00,
8:00, or 9:00 really does not significantly affect the individual
teacher. I therefore do not find the time school starts to be
a mandatory subject of bargaining under 50-1603(1). I do not,
however, find that the School District is precluded from
negotiating on the subject by 59-1603(2). I therefore find that
the time school begins is a permissible subject of bargaining.

DISCUSSION

Again, not to belabor the point, but to point out that this hearing examiner considered the issue of Indian education and the preservation of their cultural integrity. I cannot find that my determination in this matter in anyway harmed the goal of the Rocky Boy School District. The matters I determined to be mandatory subject of bargaining and permissive subjects of bargaining in no way limit the right of the School Doard out their functions in the School District. Their goal should be the same as ours, to promote public business and provide the students with the hest aducation possible. If subjects which affect the well-being of individual teachers are not proper subjects of collective bargaining then the resultant strife and unrest will prohibit the school district from attaining its goal. Rather than viewing collective bargaining as a threat to its autosony. I would encourage the School District to View collective bargaining as a tool which can be used as an aid in its ultimate goal of providing the best possible education for the students of its School District and to instill the cultural heritage and pride in the students.



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CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The School District through its harassment of RhEA have failed to burgain in good faith and have therefore committed an unfair labor practice as defined by 59-1605(1)(e).

I. The School District is guilty of an unfair labor practice in its failure to bargain on the subject of teacher evaluations, as it has failed to bargain in good faith, as defined by 59-1605(1)(e);

ORDER

1. The School District shall cease and desist from further demands on RBEA concerning its bylaws, constitution, membership, and attendance of RBEA's members at the meeting of both local and statewide mestings.

 The School District shall neet with RBEA representatives and bargain on the subject of teacher evaluations.

3. The present chairman of the School District shall send a letter to this hearing examiner stating that the School Board and its administrators fully understand this decision and order and intend to comply with it.

Dated this 14th day of December, 1976,

BOARD OF PERSONNEL APPEALS

Derryll, Painter Hearing Examiner

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

*** *** * * * * * * *

I, Vonda Brewster, hereby certify and state that I did on the 14th day of December, 1976, mail a copy of the above Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Order to the following:

Mr. Ross Cannon Attorney 1771 11th Avenue Helena, MT 59661 Ms. Emilie Loring Hilley & Loring 1713 Tenth Avenue South Great Falls, MT 59405

